

# BUSINESS

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**ENTREPRENEUR OF THE WEEK**  
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## Entrepreneur succeeds with Summer buffets

By Sherry Mitchell

GALLATIN NEWS EXAMINER

Sumner County is a long way from China, but life in the states has been good for local entrepreneur, Steven Lin.

A former salesman, Lin saw an opportunity in working to please customers. In 2001, he opened China Buffet. Since then, business at the Gallatin restaurant has taken off nicely, with a great customer base, Lin said.

"We always like to try different foods for our customers," Lin said. "The customers like new things."

Lin attributes his success to perfecting the taste of his products and providing top-notch customer service.

"For a restaurant to really succeed, the food has to taste good and the service has got to be good too," Lin said.

To make sure his customers are impressed by their dining experience at China Buffet, Lin

### CHINA BUFFET

**Location:** 158 Belvedere Drive, Gallatin

**Opened:** 2001

**Contact:** Steven Lin, owner at 206-0001

**Hours of operation:** Sunday through Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

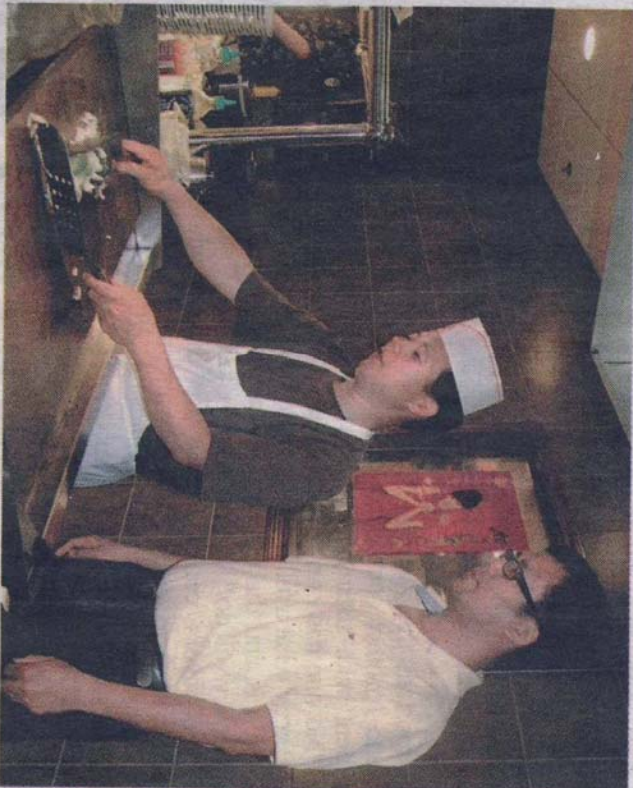
**Advice to future entrepreneurs:** "Research your area and customer base before opening a new business."

offers over 120 items on the buffet.

Everyone has their favorite, but a few of the food items always go quickly, Lin said.

"One of the customer's favorite items is the spring roll," Lin said. "A lot of the customers also like the spicy foods, especially the General Tso's chicken."

The lunch buffet includes sushi and a hibachi grill.



**Steven Lin (right), owner of China Buffet, supervises employee, Kun Hui Zheng as he cooks at the hibachi table at the Hendersonville location where customers can custom-order their meals.**

SHERRY MITCHELL/GALLATIN NEWS EXAMINER

Evening diners will notice a few extras on the buffet, including crab legs, Ribeye steak and the restaurant's famous salt and

pepper shrimp.

A menu is also available with additional items not found on the buffet, and takeout is also

available for those on the run. Since opening his first restaurant in Gallatin, Lin has learned a few things about preparation for a new business.

"The economy is not very good right now, so anytime I open a new business, I do market research first to see how many people in the surrounding area would be possible customers," Lin said, adding the research provided for his second restaurant in Hendersonville, opened in 2009, was positive.

His five- to 10-year plan includes a restaurant serving strictly Asian and Thai food, Lin said. But for right now, his two stores in Sumner County and the customers that patron them, will take priority.

"Right now, I want to do what my customers like and enjoy," Lin said.

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